Another step then taken was the removal of restrictions 204
that existed on the freedom of the press and the platform. The Press laws in the State were brought in line with those of British India. To-day there are in existence in the State over 60 newspapers and periodicals.

After the enquiry into grievances had been completed, 642
a reforms conference with Mr. Glancy as President was 646
held to give effect to His Highness' desire to associate his 666
people with the administration of the State. The result of the recommendations made by the conference and the Franchise Commission under the chairmanship of the late Sir Barjor Dalal, Kt., I. C. S. (Retired), was the establishment in 1934 of the Jammu and Kashmir Praja Sabha. A very low set of franchise qualifications was adopted, and the right of vote was at once given to about 6 per cent. of the population, including a number of women.

The Constitution then introduced permitted the asking of questions, moving of resolutions, introduction of Bills as also discussion of the State Budget. The Sabha consisted of 75 members, over 60 of whom were non-officials, 33 of them being elected. This Constitution remained in force until 1939, when His Highness the Maharaja Bahadur was pleased of his own accord, to sanction further constitutional advance by a proclamation issued on the 11th of February 1939.

The main features of the new constitutional advance were that :—

(a) the elected element in a house of 75 members was raised from 33 to 40 ;

(b) the Sabha was given the right of electing a Deputy President from amongst its non-official members ;

(c) provision was made for the appointment of [645]
non-official members as Under Secretaries to work with His Highness' Ministers and ensure closer association between the Government on the one side and the members of the Praja Sabha and the constituencies on the other ;

(d) the Sabha was given the right to vote, except with regard to a few non-votable items, on the demands made by Government for Budget appropriations ; and

(e) the Sabha was given the right of passing all legislation pertaining to taxes, as distinguished from fees and penalties.

[i.e. after an outbreak of communal troubles in 1931 -- Analyst]

end of 1941. A similar institution has been started at Jammu also. The Sericulture industry which is a Government monopoly and the carpet industry which has in recent years received subsidies provide employment for thousands of labourers. The increased industrial activities of the State have opened new avenues for industrial labour.

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The first Municipal Committees established in the State were purely official bodies, financed by Government and consisted of 24 nominated members in the case of Srinagar and 18 in the case of Jammu. The Governors of the respective Provinces functioned as *ex-officio* Presidents. In 1913, the constitution of the Municipal Committees was revised. The Srinagar Municipality was given 8 elected and 16 nominated members, and the Jammu Municipality 6 elected and 12 nominated members. One elected seat in each municipality was specially reserved for traders. In 1921 the right of election of a Vice-President from among the members of the Committee was granted.

The constitution of the Municipal Committees was further revised in 1927-28 and the elected element raised to one-half. In 1936, the franchise qualifications were lowered and brought in line with those prescribed for the Praja Sabha election. The elected element was substantially increased to provide a clear majority. The Municipal Act recently passed provides that unless the Government otherwise direct, the appointed members should not exceed one-fourth of the whole Committee. This Act has also enlarged the scope and powers of the Committees in many respects. A new procedure has been laid down for constituting municipalities and altering units or excluding areas from municipalities, and provision has been made for giving opportunities to the inhabitants of those areas that are proposed to be included in or excluded from the municipal limits to submit their objections within a specified time limit.

To guard against overcrowding in the cities of Jammu and Srinagar, several areas have been notified under the Town Planning Act and schemes for their development are under consideration. The Town